



# SECRETARY OF STATE BRIAN P. KEMP

## GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

Georgia Composite Board, 237 Coliseum Dr Macon, GA 31217  
<http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors> P: 478-207-2440 F: 866 888-7127

April 2010  
Volume 2, Issue 2

## Update from the Director

*Randy Vaughn*

The last quarter of the year is one of the busiest processing times for the staff at PLB. We have twelve different license types in renewal during the period along with a number of December graduates applying for various licenses. For existing license holders, our on-line renewal process allows us to process in excess of 92% of our renewals with very nominal staff involvement. It also provides our customers with a process that is fast, efficient, paperless and accurate.

For the new graduates, we now have 32 on-line applications available for those applying for their first license with us. This enables some new graduates to go on-line, register, apply for licensure and pay their fees. This paperless system allows the staff to process applications much quicker to the benefit of the applicant who can receive their license and go to work much

## About the Board

The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists consist of ten members: three licensed professional counselors, three licensed social workers, three licensed marriage and family therapists and one consumer member. Typically, the Board meets twelve times each year. Board meetings are open to the public, with the exception of executive session, in which confidential matters such as complaints, disciplinary items, and applications are discussed.

The Board is charged by law with regulating the practice of professional counseling, social work, and marriage and family therapy in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Georgia. It does so by enforcing the education and training requirements established by law for licensure in each profession, by adopting and enforcing a code of ethics governing licensees, by establishing and enforcing continuing education requirements, and by addressing unlicensed practice in these professions.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Update from the Director	1
About the Board	1
2010 Meeting Dates	2
Board Members and Staff	2
Active Licensees and Expiration Dates	2
Actions Taken by the Board	2-3
License Renewal Process	3
Complaint Process Information	4
Frequently Asked Questions	4

faster than in the past. We are planning more on-line applications for the near future.

As we begin the year 2010, we will continue to offer more services on-line and strive to improve our processing times. For license holders, please keep your personal information up to date and accurate so our transactions with you can be faster and more accurate.

## 2010 Meeting Dates

April 2, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 May 7, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 June 4, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 July 9, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 August 6, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 September 10, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 October 1, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 November 5, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.  
 December 3, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

The Board meets at the Professional Licensing Board Office in Macon.

Minutes from the Board meetings may be found on the Board's website at [www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors](http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors)

## Active Licensees

Professional Counselor: 4,025  
 Marriage and Family Therapist: 655  
 Clinical Social Worker: 2,693  
 Master Social Worker: 1,790  
 Assoc. Marriage and Family Therapist: 43  
 Associate Professional Counselor: 852

## Board Members and Staff

George William "Bill" Quarterman, EdD, LPC,  
 Professor, Chair

Gene Thomas Schrader, MFT, Vice-Chair

Helen W. Coale, CSW

Bonnie Barker, LPC

Patricia Rice Harwell, MFT

Jack Perryman, LPC

Janet H. Lenard, EdD, LCSW, CAC II, CCS

Jan Ligon, PhD, LCSW, Assoc. Professor

Will Bacon, MFT

Eunice Mixon, Consumer Member

Brig Zimmerman

Executive Director

Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists

## Expiration Dates

Associate Marriage & Family Therapist: September 30 of even numbered years

Associate Professional Counselor: September 30 of even numbered years

Clinical Social Worker: September 30 of even numbered years

Marriage & Family Therapist: September 30 of even numbered years

Master Social Worker: September 30 of even numbered years

Professional Counselor: September 30 of even numbered years

**"It is illegal to practice as a Professional Counselor, a Social Worker or a Marriage & Family Therapist with an expired license."**

## Actions Taken by the Board

**February:** The Board voted to license four clinical social workers by exam waiver, one clinical social worker by reinstatement, 23 associate professional counselors by exam waiver, 39 professional counselors by exam waiver, one professional counselor by reactivation, two professional counselors by reinstatement, two marriage and family therapists by endorsement, and four master social workers by exam waiver.

**March:** The Board voted to license four clinical social workers by exam waiver, one clinical social worker by reinstatement, one clinical social worker by reactivation, 20 associate professional counselors by exam waiver, 25 professional counselors by exam waiver, two professional counselors by reinstatement, two marriage and family therapists by exam waiver, eight master social workers by exam waiver, and one master social worker by reinstatement.

The Board voted to deny the following petitions for waiver/variance requests:

- Priscilla Jones, Atlanta: Rule 135-6-04(2)
- Kelly Freeman, Sugar Hill: Rule 135-6-0.6(4)

The Board voted to post the following rule amendments; Public Hearing to be held May 7, 2010 @ 1:30 p.m.:

- Rule 135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle. Amended. Purpose of this rule is to change the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.
- Rule 145-6-.04 Revocation of Expired Licenses and Reinstatement of Expired Licenses. Amended. Purpose of this rule is to clarify language regarding the revocation of an expired license and reinstatement of an expired license.

## License Renewal Process

### How do I renew my license?

You may renew your license on the Professional Licensing Board website with a credit card. Click on the License Renewal icon and follow the instructions. You will be asked a series of questions including whether you have been arrested, convicted of a crime or received a board sanction since the last renewal, whether you have completed your continuing education requirements, and whether you are a U.S. citizen. Renewing your license via the website is the fastest way to renew your license.

The Professional Licensing Boards do not mail paper renewals unless requested. A paper renewal form may be requested by the licensee either by calling the Board office at 478-207-2440, or by submitting a written request.

### Disciplinary Issues:

The Board addresses these issues on a case-by-case basis and applies sanctions to those who violate the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists Practice Act, Board rules, and policies. It is important that licensees review all laws, rules and policies that affect their profession. These may be found on the Board's website at [www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors](http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors).

All public disciplinary actions will be reflected in the Board minutes which may be found on the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists website <http://sos.georgia.gov/plb/counselors>.

Grounds for denial, suspension, revocation of a license, or other disciplinary actions may be found at O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-17 or at O.C.G.A. § 43-1-19, which can be found on the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists website.

## Complaint Process Information

The Georgia General Assembly created the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists to regulate the licensing and practice of professional counseling, social work and marriage and family therapy. The responsibility of administering the laws in O.C.G.A. § 43-10A is given to the Board, whose members are appointed by the Governor. The Board determines if applicants meet licensure requirements, promulgates rules, and considers complaints against licensees and allegations of unlicensed practice. The process for disposing of complaints is as follows:

### **Complaint Form:**

Complaints must be reported to and received by the Board in writing. Written complaints may be submitted to the Board office or be submitted on-line at <http://sos.georgia.gov/myverification/submitcomplaint.aspx>. Documents received in connection with a complaint will not be returned. The complaint must contain sufficient factual evidence indicating a clear violation of Georgia law or Board rules.

### **Investigations:**

The Board gives serious consideration to all complaints. Further investigative action may be taken. Should you file a complaint, you may be contacted by a Board inspector or investigator for additional information. Investigative files are considered confidential for any purpose other than a hearing before the Board. However, the Board is authorized to release such records to another enforcement agency or lawful licensing authority.

### **Notification Process:**

While the investigation is ongoing, the Board is unable to discuss the status of a complaint with anyone, including the complainant. When the Board has completed the case, the complainant will be notified in writing of the Board's actions. All public disciplinary actions will be reflected in the Board minutes which are found on the Board website. Public disciplinary actions may be found on our website at: [www.sos.ga.gov/plb/publicorders/](http://www.sos.ga.gov/plb/publicorders/)

## Frequently Asked Questions

The Board list of frequently asked questions is available on the Board's website. If you cannot find an answer to your question, you may contact the Board office at (478) 207-2440.